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(Note: Because of small Ns, only overall and gender findings are summarized).

Results

- Both female (N=109) and male (N=59) interviewees presented themselves as ambitious, confident, and successful students overall; most were highly or moderately confident about their employment prospects.
- The students' overall experience with their programs was positive in Years 1 and 2, less so in Year 3. Men were somewhat more positive in Years 1 and 2, while women were more positive in Year 3. The students' main wish for change was to incorporate more practical experiences into the curriculum. Some women also wished for better support and better work-life balance, while some men wished for more funding.
- Women described receiving somewhat more mentoring and being more satisfied with it; considered friends more important to their satisfaction; and credited their personal life for helping to create a good work-life balance. However, more men said they had a good work-life balance; felt a sense of belonging in their programs; belonged to clubs and organizations, including in leadership roles; and felt that their personal values matched those of their field.
- Despite similarities in amount of computer use and use of computers for communication, men reported higher levels of computer skill; being more "techie," and knowing how to program more often than women. Men and women also defined "techie" somewhat differently, with women placing greater emphasis on hardware.
- Men more than women thought that both men and women are treated fairly in their programs. Women were more likely to think that women/minorities should be recruited, to be aware of specific recruitment/support activities by their programs, and to have participated in such activities. While most students agreed that men are advantaged in their IT field and they take a somewhat negative view of that, most don't call themselves 'feminists.'

Take Home Findings

Most students selected their program of study out of interest/enjoyment, and men and women described similar gratifications from their IT studies: creating something useful; making a difference; solving problems; overcoming challenges. However, women were much more willing to consider CS/MIS than men were willing to consider LIS/IST as potential fields of study. For women, the main reason for not choosing CS or MIS was a perceived lack of technical background and skills, while some men commented that LIS and IST were not technical enough. This suggests that overcoming women's fears and misunderstandings about computer programming would increase the number of women in technical IT fields, and that overcoming men's (and society's) prejudices against applied, human-centered IT fields could reduce gendered hierarchies within IT.